



Secretary of the Air Force
Office of Legislative Liaison

CONGRESSIONAL HEARING RESUME

106TH Congress

Date: 26 October 99

SUBJECT: **Status of Forces**

COMMITTEE: **Senate Armed Services Committee**

CHAIRMAN: ***John Warner (R-VA)**

**MEMBERS
PRESENT (*):**

REPUBLICANS

***Strom Thurmond (SC)**
John McCain (AZ)
Robert Smith (NH)
***James Inhofe (OK)**
Rick Santorum (PA)
*** Olympia Snowe (MN)**
*** Pat Roberts (KS)**
Wayne Allard (CO)
***Tim Hutchinson (AR)**
*** Jeff Sessions (AL)**

DEMOCRATS

***Carl Levin (MI)**
***Edward Kennedy (MA)**
Jeff Bingaman (NM)
Robert Byrd (WV)
***Charles Robb (VA)**
Joseph Lieberman (CT)
Max Cleland (GA)
Mary Landrieu (LA)
***Jack Reed (RI)**

WITNESSES: **See Attached**

Information contained in this resume was obtained during an open hearing. It will not be released outside of the Department of Defense (DOD) agencies until published hearing transcripts have been released by the Committee, and only to the extent it is in accord with published hearing procedures.

Prepared by: Mr. Barry Graham **Date:** 26 October 99 **Ext:** 614-9898

WITNESSES

General Henry H. Shelton, USA, Chairman, JCS
General Michael E. Ryan, USAF, Chief of Staff
General Eric K. Shinseki, USA, Chief of Staff
Admiral Jay L. Johnson, USN, CNO
General James L. Jones, USMC, Commandant

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The atmosphere was very friendly. Sen Levin brought attention to the 1.4% cut across the board proposal which Gen Shelton characterized as having a devastating effect on the military. Sen Robb raised the JSF and F-22 issue. Gen Ryan told committee members the JSF and F-22 were linked just as the F-16 and F-15 were. F-22 is the primary replacement for the F-15 and the JSF is the primary replacement for the F-16 and A-10. Gen Ryan emphasized these programs were affordable because they are scheduled to be phased in at different times as similar programs have in the past. With regards to the restoration of MC rates, Gen Ryan told Sen Sessions the key was equipment funding. Said the Air Force needs to modernize aircraft with the upgrades they need. Cited the slow aging of aircraft fleet as the cause of the downturn in MC rates.

The Committee was called to order at 0945 by Sen Warner, Chairman.

Chairman Warner

Opened the hearing by noting the President signed the FY00 DOD Appropriations yesterday. He hoped military personnel realized that the Service Chiefs laid the foundation to make the pay raises and retirement reforms contained in the bill a reality in last year's hearing on readiness. Said the bill contained the first real increase in defense spending in 14-15 years. However, he stated the Committee is concerned that the money given is still inadequate to meet the military's needs. Cited recruiting and retention, shortage of spare parts, and the lack of adequate training for personnel as problem areas. Stressed that next year's focus should be on ways to improve military health care. He explained that when he and other senators travel to military bases, health care always comes up as a problem for both active and retired military personnel.

Ranking Member Sen Levin

Praised our men and women in uniform as being the best in the world. Service-wide, he thought readiness was moving in the right direction with the exception of the Air Force. Touched on the negative impact the proposed 1.4% cut would have on defense. He also spoke out in support of another BRAC round and criticized the congressional practice of earmarking.

Gen Shelton

Said that forward-deployed forces are capable of winning a nearly simultaneous 2 MTW. Casualties under a 1 MTW scenario would be moderate and under a 2 MTW high, he said.

Stressed to Senators that our military force has been reduced by almost 40% with commitments increasing. Stated there were three major issues with regards to funding. First, the \$112B increase on the FYDP was not locked in, although it has the President's support. This funding will meet the Services' most critical readiness requirements. Noted this \$112B is embedded in our programs and our progress on readiness would be severely hampered without it. Second, the 1.4% cut would have a devastating effect on the military. Third, he explained the FY00 budget does not include the \$2B required to sustain the U.S. commitment to NATO's Kosovo operation. Characterized TRICARE as improving.

Gen Ryan

Told committee members the Air Force appreciates their readiness support and efforts. Said money has been applied against spare parts and depots. Relayed to members the Air Force was more heavily tasked during Kosovo than any time within the past 4 decades including Desert Storm. Indicated readiness was down an additional 5% since he testified last year. Listed underfunding, loss of skilled personnel, and Kosovo as contributing factors. The FY99 supplemental and the FY00 budget will help stem the decline, he stated. Noted that 42% of pilots eligible had taken the bonus this year compared with 25% last year. 1999, he relayed, marked the first year the Air Force did not meet its recruiting goal and the second year it didn't meet reenlistment goals.

Chairman Warner

Said the FY00 was the building block for the FY01 budget. Announced he was planning another hearing with the Chiefs in a couple of months to keep abreast on readiness concerns so they could be incorporated into the FY01 budget cycle. He also relayed the Committee will schedule a hearing on the issue of military personnel receiving food stamps. Asked Service Chiefs to give the Committee an idea of shortfalls they see in the FY01 budget.

Gen Ryan

Responded that last year he requested \$5B over the FYDP and received \$2.5B. Emphasized we need funding to fight the next war, not the last one. Explained if every aircraft modernization program were funded, the average age of our aircraft would still be 30 years old.

Ranking Member Sen Levin

Asked each Service Chief how the proposed 1.4% cut in the military budget would effect them.

Gen Ryan

Said the Air Force had contracts that could not be broken and had to be paid, taking money away from the other accounts. Characterized the cut as a big step backward.

Ranking Member Sen Levin

Brought attention to the \$550M cut in the F-22 program contained in the FY00 DOD Appropriations bill. Asked if that made sense in light of additional F-15s being appropriated for, but not requested.

Gen Ryan

Stated the funding shortfall would have to be addressed in the FY01 budget along with a lot of unfunded requirements.

Sen Inhofe

Asked Gen Ryan to discuss the potential of the Global Hawk.

Gen Ryan

Indicated he was a fan of UAVs, which add to our capability to characterize the battlefield. Said the Global Hawk would take pressure off the U-2 optempo.

Sen Inhofe

Referenced the October Air Force Magazine article quoting Gen Jumper as saying that the most advanced Russian fighters now available for export are in many cases more capable than the best thing we have. Said these comments make the case for the F-22.

Gen Ryan

Said the F-22 has passed every flight test and has more flight time than the F-16 and F-15 at the similar developmental stage.

Sen Reed

Asked why the B-1 wasn't used in Kosovo.

Gen Ryan

Replied the B-1 was used extensively in Kosovo and performed magnificently.

Sen Snowe

Asked the Service Chiefs if budget constraints have prevented them from doing things.

Gen Ryan

Emphasized that people are the Air Force's biggest concern. Said we are 1200 pilots short now and expected to rise to 1500 in the future. Because of the time it takes to train pilots, he stressed to Members that it would take a long time to recover from such a shortfall. Cited \$2.5 shortfall in FY00 as another contributing factor to readiness decline.

Sen Robb

Asked about retention rates.

Gen Ryan

Relayed Air Force retention rates were running about 5% below goals: 55% for 1st term; 75% for 2nd term; 95% for career.

Sen Robb

Raised the JSF and F-22 issue.

General Ryan

Told committee members the JSF and F-22 were linked just as the F-16 and F-15 were. F-22 is the primary replacement for the F-15 and the JSF is the primary replacement for the F-16 and A-10. Emphasized these programs were affordable because they are scheduled to be phased in at different times as similar programs have in the past.

General Shelton

Added that historically 14% of the DOD budget has been spent on tactical aircraft and that these aircraft are within the parameters.

Chairman Warner

Asked witnesses if there was unity on going forward with the JSF program.

All Witnesses

Yes.

Sen Sessions

Brought up the issue of a 3rd star for ANG/RE Chiefs. Believes the ANG/RE are not as well respected as they ought to be. Cited the need for sufficient rank at the top.

Sen Warner

Stated authority was given in the FY00 DOD Auth to raise the ranks and that next year it will be law.

Ranking Member Sen Levin

Asked Service Chiefs if it was proper to require military personnel to take the anthrax immunization shot and if it was safe.

All Witnesses

Yes to both questions.

Ranking Member Sen Levin

With regards to the 3-star for ANG/RE, he asked for the record, what position would each Service downgrade to make it happen.

Sen Sessions

Asked what the Air Force needed to restore MC rates.

Gen Ryan

Told Sen Sessions the key was equipment funding. Said the Air Force needs to modernize aircraft with the upgrades they need. Cited the slow aging of aircraft fleet as the cause of the downturn in MC rates. Also reemphasized that the JSF is linked to the F-22 and requirements would not be met if the link were broken.

Hearing adjourned at 1315